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# Louisiana Acadian Handicrafts

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LOUISIANA ACADIAN HANDICRAFTS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science

in

The Department of Industrial Education

by  
Valex Richard  
B.S., Southwestern Louisiana Institute. 1950  
June, 1951

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## ABSTRACT

It was the purpose of the writer to make a study of the Acadian handicraft work and to determine its role in the settlement of Louisiana. It was the problem to secure authoritative information concerning the Acadian handicraft work as it is being done today. This required discovery of each craft's origin, brief tracing of its development, and its value to the Acadian people.

To make this craft study, the writer visited the Acadian settlement in Southwestern Louisiana, interviewed officials, watched the native Acadian craftsmen at work, inspected equipment, took photographs of the craft designs, questioned producer or owner as to origin, and read published and unpublished material available in that section of Louisiana.

It was found that the Acadian Handicraft aims not only to preserve the handicrafts of the Acadians in Louisiana but to instill into the products of the Acadian craftsman a quality unknown to other parts of the world. The handicrafts are an intricate part of their regular farming chores.

The following five crafts are described: chair making, palmetto work, loom work, hair-rope making, and basketry. It was found that these crafts are still being done the same way as they were one hundred and fifty years ago.

## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

The Acadian arts and crafts handed down through more than one hundred and fifty years, since the Acadians settled in Louisiana's bayou and prairie land, are beginning to mean more than a preservation of culture and tradition to many of these French speaking people of the state.

The handicraft work was at one time practiced throughout the Acadian Country, but now it is almost a lost art. Today through the help of the General Extension Division of Louisiana State University, and books being written about the handicraft, these people of French descent are being encouraged to preserve their skill and interest in handicraft work.

For this study the writer chose only five of the crafts being practiced today. All information about these crafts was gathered directly from people of Acadian French descent who speak very little English.

All the craft work in the Acadian Country is done during leisure time. No regular working hours have been found for any of these craft workers. The working materials for these crafts are obtained from the local area. The crafts of today are still being made in the same style as those made one hundred and fifty years ago. Although parts of this culture apply to all Frenchmen of Louisiana, the culture herein described is, above all, that of the Acadians in Louisiana of the present day.



Here large numbers of people still carry on life in much the same way as did their forefathers. The handicrafts have been referred to as an integral part of the culture of the Acadian people and the articles made by these people possess a very high degree of individuality and appreciation and a superior quality of workmanship.

The handicrafts are not the only distinguishing element in the culture of these Acadian people. They have music, old-time hymns, and folk songs which are being preserved in written form and on phonograph records. The handicraft work done by the first Acadian settlers was strictly from a necessity standpoint and for personal use, but now, in the period of revival, many new types of articles are being made to sell. The effort to supply the outside markets has added greatly to the variety of craft work and includes many articles of beauty that have given the Acadian people a place of recognition in handicraft work.

At the present time there are between forty to fifty people working for the Acadian Handicraft Project with a total gross income of seven to ten thousand dollars a year.

#### Purpose of the study

It was the purpose of this study:

- (1) To give an account of the work done by the Acadians who settled in the southwestern part of Louisiana;
- (2) To find out how the crafts were kept up from generation to generation;
- (3) To determine in which area a certain craft was performed;
- (4) To explore the background of the present day popular Acadian handicraft work still being done in the Acadian country and

also to have a written account of some of these crafts;

- (5) To determine the possibility of including Acadian handicraft work in the industrial arts program of the public schools of Southwestern Louisiana;
- (6) To acquaint those outside the region with this great reservoir of Acadian handicraft work, and to encourage a wider use of Acadian products.

### Importance of the study

The importance of this study is to have some written records of the Acadian Handicraft work, which, at one time was very popular. Up to this day there has been no written record about the Acadian craft work. Recently the revival of Acadian craft work has been organized into a work project. A written record of the work is highly desirable to develop an interest in the continuation of the handicraft movement in Louisiana.

### Source of data

The data for this study were secured from the following sources:

- (1) The writer visited the Acadian Country in Southwestern Louisiana where he watched the Acadian craftsmen at work, interviewed officials, inspected equipment, and took photos of the different crafts.
- (2) The writer inquired from the producers or the owners as to the origin of the craftwork.
- (3) Published and unpublished material pertaining to the subject was reviewed.

### Delimitations

This study was limited to five crafts still being done by the Acadians in Louisiana. This study was also limited in area to include five parishes in the south central part of the State, namely: Lafayette, Vermilion, St. Landry, Acadia, and St. Martin.

### Organization of Study

Chapter I contains an explanation of the problem, the purpose of the study, source of data, importance of the study and delimitation.

Chapter II is about the related literature pertaining to this study of Acadian Handicraft and what other states are doing in that line of work.

Chapter III is about the history of the Acadians in Louisiana. Why these people left Nova Scotia, when they came to Louisiana, and their mode of living.

Chapter IV deals with the revival of the Acadian craft work, and how it got its first sum of money appropriated for the work, the field representative now assigned to the Louisiana State University, General Extension Division, and her working area.

Chapter V is made up of data gathered from the Acadian handicraft workers and a history of each individual craft as found in the Acadian country. The chair, palmetto, loom, hair rope, and the baskets are the five crafts herein described in this chapter.

Chapter VI consists of the summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II

### RELATED STUDIES

In reviewing other studies in other states it has been found that weaving still has its place in Arkansas. In that state they have formed an organization to promote this craft. The organization is called the Northwest Arkansas Hand Weavers Guild and it is making plans to promote bigger and better markets for the articles made by its members. Some of these articles have been exhibited in many towns throughout the state of Arkansas. Most of the articles exhibited were made on the loom.<sup>1</sup>

At Berea College in Kentucky the development of the woodwork, weaving and smaller crafts has been an effort to revive the handicraft in the Highlands Country. Dr. Frost, in 1896, started to encourage the holding of homespun fairs during commencement week at Berea College. Many premiums were given for the best products of the loom, and thereby caused competition for better quality of work. The fairs continued for many years, and hand-made furniture and other woodwork were added later to the list of exhibits.

These activities brought attention to some of the best workers who still wove for their families back in the mountains and to others who had

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<sup>1</sup>Noah D. Holmes, "She Weaves Her Hobby," Progressive Farmer, CXV (September, 1950), 95.

abandoned the practice but were glad to pick it up again.

The main idea of this project at Berea was to help some students in earning their way through college and also to have a clear account of what had been made by the earlier mountain settlers.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Frost gave the handicraft workers guild the appropriate name "Fireside industries."

During the same time that the handicraft revival was going on in Kentucky, the renewed interest in hand-made things appeared in North Carolina. The movement was sponsored by the social workers of the church. Their first articles for sale were the coverlets and as time went on more articles were made for sale.<sup>3</sup>

Some time after the movement had been started in North Carolina the neighboring state of Tennessee had a similar program. This enterprise, known as the "Shuttle-Crafters," is an active handicraft group today.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Allen H. Eaton, "Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands," Philadelphia; Wm. F. Fell Company, 1939, pp. 60-64.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 64-66.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

## CHAPTER III

### THE ACADIAN PEOPLE

In 1604 a company of noblemen from France, which included the famous explorer Champlain, founded a colony in the French Territory of North America, known as New France, which was named Acadia and is now called Nova Scotia.

Colonists continued to arrive from France and the population grew rapidly and fertile farms spread over Acadia.

In 1713 France ceded Acadia to England; allegiance to the English Crown was exacted of the French Acadians and a ban was placed on the Catholic Religion. The Acadians were expelled at the end of the Seven Years' War because of their refusal to take the unconditional oath of allegiance to the British Crown. They had persistently refused to take the oath ever since their homeland was ceded to Britain in 1713 by terms of the treaty of Utrecht.<sup>1</sup>

Charles Laurance, Governor of Acadia, in 1755, started the deportation of the French Catholic Acadians. Over six thousand of the settlers were violently expelled; causing untold misery, both physical and moral, and death to many men, women, and children. Their dwellings and churches were burned and the crops destroyed.<sup>2</sup> These unfortunates were herded

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<sup>1</sup>Edwin L. Stephens, "The Story of Acadian Education in Louisiana," Louisiana Historical Quarterly, III (July, 1935), 656.

<sup>2</sup>Arthur G. Doughty, The Acadian Exiles. (Toronto: Glasgow, Brook, and Company, 1922), p. 124.

like sheep on board transports to be scattered along the Atlantic coast, among a hostile people of different tongue and creed.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the exiles after incredible hardships returned to Acadia only to be expelled again in 1762. Some went to France, others to the Antilles, and many at last found a true home in Louisiana. They were hospitably received in Louisiana because of the natural ties of race, religion and nationality held in common from the mother country of France by the colonists of both Acadia and Louisiana.

The historian, Fortier, says the first arrivals of Acadians in Louisiana is recorded as of February, 1765, when one hundred and twenty-three Acadians arrived from Santo Domingo.<sup>4</sup> Others followed, coming from Halifax, then Maryland, Georgia and the Carolinas, and were given lands on the Mississippi River above the German settlement, whence they gradually became widely extended throughout their present homes in South-western Louisiana.

Other historians seem to disagree with Mr. Fortier as to the exact date of the arrival of the Acadians, but for the purpose of this study the date 1765 will be considered as the year which the Acadians first came to Louisiana.<sup>5</sup>

As soon as word of the new home in Louisiana spread to refugees settled along the Atlantic coast, many other Acadians came in to join

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<sup>3</sup>Francis Parkman, "The Acadian Tragedy," Harper's, LXIX (November, 1884), 877-880.

<sup>4</sup>Alcee Fortier, Louisiana, (Atlanta: Southern Historical Association, 1909), p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>Sidney A. Marchand, Acadian Exiles in the Golden Coast of Louisiana, (1943) p. 28.

those who were already there. According to historians, only four thousand Acadians reached the state, but today their descendants have multiplied the original number many times.<sup>6</sup> This section of Louisiana, settled by the Acadians, has been called by such names as: Evangeline, Teche, Attakapas, and Acadian Country which all mean the same, but for this study it will be referred to as the Acadian Country (Figure 1).

The Acadians on their arrival in New Orleans, in search for a place to make their homes, were told about the town of St. Martinville along Bayou Teche. Between 1765 and 1800 there were steady migrations of Acadians to this region. St. Martinville was one of the places in this section where the new arrivals would be assigned land grants, and too, the people in St. Martinville were predominantly Catholics. These people were welcomed and encouraged by the local occupants to settle there. Captain Antoine Dauterive in 1765 made a gift of one bull and five cows with calves, to each Acadian family who would settle in the prairies of the Attakapas.

The first considerable number of Acadians exiled from Nova Scotia was between 1760 and 1770, during which time the Spanish and French colonial governments made many land grants.<sup>7</sup> Before the close of the Spanish regime there were other French speaking exiles who sought refuge in this section. The Cadets from French noble families also took up land grants in the vicinity of St. Martinville. These French nobility regarded themselves as temporary exiles from Paris and wanted to maintain their former mode of life. The customs and scale of living of these people caused the

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<sup>6</sup>Fortier, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>7</sup>Fortier, op. cit., p. 21.



village to be called "Le Petit Paris" or Little Paris. It was only a few years after Louisiana became a state, the village was incorporated and given the name of St. Martinville, in honor of the fourth-century bishop, Martin.

In this far away town which could be reached only by boat at first, in which the French nobility were living like kings, was built the first "opera house" in the United States.

The settlers' homes were built from the material at hand. The Acadians built their homes of split cypress boards and used clay and Spanish moss as a crack filler. The cypress trees were gathered from the local swamp area. This type of wood is very durable and it does not decay but eventually wears out with the weather. Their houses usually had a wide porch, main floor and an attic (Figure 2). The plantation type of houses seen now with two stories and big columns from the ground to the roof got started some time after the coming of the Greek to the Acadian Country in 1820.

Nowadays, when one goes to Southwest Louisiana, into the dreamy Acadian country along the Bayou Teche, one may perhaps find oneself trailing a company of tourists, rather than the shadowy Evangeline of a century and a half ago. But, whether one makes the journey like a pilgrim intent upon following the wanderings of Longfellow's gentle heroine, or as a tourist, lured by a region as remote as possible from commonplace experience, St. Martinville and its neighboring towns are full of charm. But in St. Martinville, your first glimpse of the hotel, the rather plain old church nearby, the row of substantial village stores across the way, may suggest a cozy New England village rather than an Acadian town. However,

step into the grocery, the bakery, the drugstore, and listen; you will hear the proprietor speaking the same soft Acadian French that Evangeline spoke when she wandered about asking news of Gabriel.<sup>8</sup> Of course, the merchant can speak English also, but often their customers cannot, and in any case, French is preferred.

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<sup>8</sup> Grace McKinstry, "Acadians in Louisiana," Catholic World, CXXII (October, 1925), 19-24.

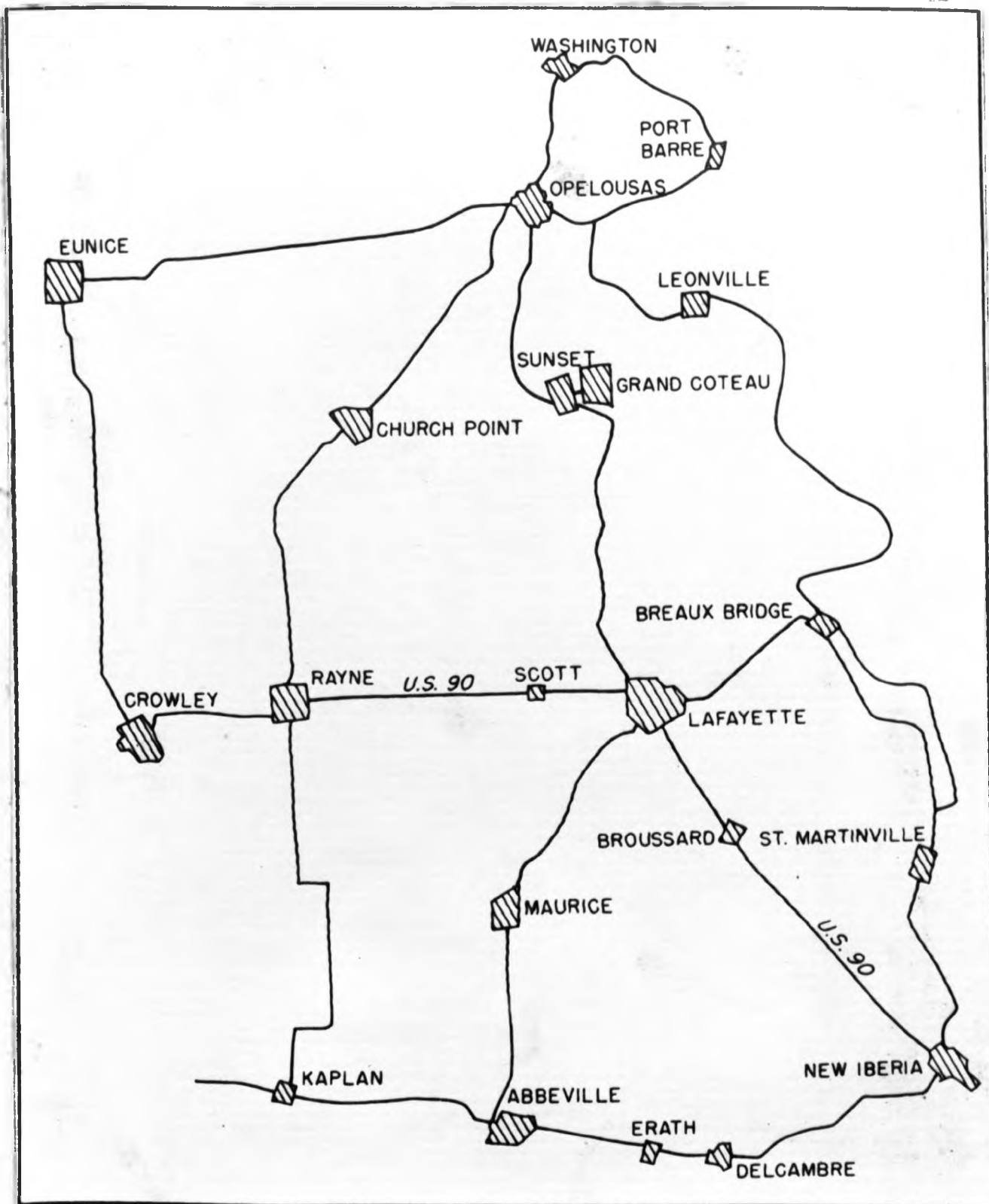


FIGURE 1

Acadian Section of Louisiana



FIGURE 2

Acadian House

## CHAPTER IV

### REVIVAL OF ACADIAN CRAFT WORK

In 1938 the Louisiana State University General Extension Division obtained a sum of money from the General Education Board of New York City for a project directed to the French speaking people of Louisiana. The aim of the program was to work toward the preservation of the language, culture and traditions of the Acadian people in the State of Louisiana. Miss Louise V. Olivier was appointed Field Representative for the general extension work. She was assigned twenty-four parishes to work in and to present from ten to twelve programs every year featuring the French songs, stories and dances for the people of each respective area. It was during these programs that Miss Olivier became familiar with the handicraft work of the French Louisianians of Acadian descent. The Acadian Handicraft Project originated as a by-product of the Louisiana State University General Extension French project.

Interest in Acadian craft work was renewed during the beginning years of World War II, when some northern soldiers were stationed in Louisiana. It all began when a soldier, a native of Connecticut, complained to no less a person than the Governor of Louisiana that he could not find appropriate souvenirs in the bayou state. In his complaints he suggested various ways in which Louisiana local color could be developed as an attraction to outsiders.

Miss Louise Olivier, Field Representative of the Louisiana State University, General Extension Division, on August 10, 1942, submitted the complaints to the director, Dr. Marion B. Smith, and stated, "I feel confident that most of the self-styled Connecticut Yankee's suggestions can be carried out in my 1942-43 plans, in regard to his suggestion concerning appropriate souvenirs from the Acadian Country."

For years Miss Olivier had been organizing assemblies, *Francais*, where old French songs, dances and games were revived by the people in whose lives these ancient customs had once played an important part.

Miss Olivier knew the French people of the Acadian Country, their temperament and abilities. When the Acadian handicraft movement developed as a natural by-product of the French Assemblies, she was ready to direct it.

Many handicraft exhibits have been held in the towns in the Acadian Country to help keep the traditions and crafts of their ancestors and to instill into the young people the possible value in making the different handicraft products. Most popular of the craft products are the hats, handbags, sewing baskets, flower carriers, shopping bags, and slippers, all woven from palmettos which grow wild in the local swamps. The most durable of the craft work is the chair, and there are also baskets made of oak, rope made of hair, all of which is still being done today.

The first handicraft exhibit was held in Abbeville, Louisiana, on April 10, 1940, displaying the homespun work of Mrs. J. D. Dronet of Erath, Louisiana. This exhibit was very much of a success and was witnessed by an attendance of three thousand. Later exhibits have been instances for the revival and development of traditional skills as a matter of every day

usefulness.

At the present time there are more than twenty Acadian handicraft exhibit shops in different towns all over Louisiana.<sup>1</sup> People visiting Louisiana nowadays are sure to find suitable souvenirs from the Acadian handicraft shops to take back home. The Acadian handicraft label has a registered trademark under which all articles are sold.

Today through the help of the General Extension Division of Louisiana State University, the Acadian people are being encouraged not only to continue and preserve these arts and skills, but to develop for themselves a modest, profitable handicraft industry.

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<sup>1</sup>See Appendix.

## CHAPTER V

### TYPICAL ACADIAN HANDICRAFT

#### The Chair

The chair is known to man as being one of the oldest pieces of furniture he has ever used. The origin is not known, but according to pictures they varied in size, shape, and kinds of materials that went into making a chair. The material from which it was made depended upon the section of country in which one lived.

For instance, the Acadians who settled in Louisiana along Bayou Teche, had their own peculiar way of making chairs. The Acadians were skilled craftsmen and started to fabricate the chair soon after they landed. It is believed that the development of the chair as it is today is unquestionably local. The same type of chairs done way back in 1765 is still being made in some sections of the Acadian Country; the same style and material are still being used. Where the style came from would be difficult to say. At one time it probably was not to be distinguished from the style of many other sections, including Cuba and other former Spanish Colonies. The distinctive point is that the Acadian continues to make and use these chairs while other people have taken over the use of factory made chairs from elsewhere.

These chairs were to be seen in every Acadian home in Southwest Louisiana up to some thirty years ago. They are sturdy, serviceable, and seem to last forever. Only the seats ever wear out, which are easily



replaced with new cowhide.<sup>1</sup>

The seat of the chair is made of leather and hickory, oak or ash is used for the frame woodwork. This particular type of chair is known to be the most comfortable and durable. Many have been in use for over one hundred years and still holds true to form. One oddity of the chair is that it is only fifteen inches high as compared to seventeen inches for the present day factory made chair. The home made Acadian chair is wider in front than the back, so different rung lengths are needed.

The writer interviewed the man who is still making the chairs today the same way as when he started in 1912. During those days it was the common practice for the father to teach his son a trade so he could be kept at home. The lack of schools also made it more practical for him to stay at home. The present chair maker has learned his trade the traditional way from his father.

"In the good old days," as it is referred to now, the amount of tools were very limited due to financial means, so most tools were home-made. Many tools that were used in 1912, when this particular chair maker went into business, are still in use.

At first the chairs were made to supply the family's demand and any surplus chairs were for sale. Before World War I the chairs were priced at \$1.25 as compared to the present price of \$5.00 per chair.

The present day chair maker has never at any time made chairs except in his spare time. He has other means of making a living, but he

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<sup>1</sup>Lauren C. Post, "Acadian Education," Louisiana State University Alumni News, XII (April, 1936), 6.

still wants to make the chair the old fashioned way. When it is too wet or too cold to do anything else, he will spend the day in his shop.

By doing some parts of the chair at different times makes it just right for assembling. Some parts of the chair are made and stored for some time to assure complete dryness, while other parts need to be assembled while the wood is still green.

The wood used for chair making can be had locally either from the sawmill or the chair maker gets it himself from the woods. The most desirable wood for this type of work is hickory, but oak or ash have been used successfully. These chairs are still assembled the same way their great grandfathers used to assemble them, without nails, glue, or dowels. The way the chair is assembled is what makes it hold together. The rung and the back rest are dry and press fit into the legs which are green. As the chair legs begin to dry the drilled hole in the green wood starts to get smaller and thereby puts more pressure on the rung and the back, causing them to have a very tight fit and eliminating the use of any wood fasteners.

The legs and rungs are made on a lathe bought in 1912 and which is still in good working condition (Figure 3). In his shop, the motor has replaced the foot-power lathe, but otherwise, his craft has changed but little in many decades. The power used for turning the lathe is an old one-cylinder gasoline engine. Due to knowledge, skill, and experience, the chair maker has made most of the tools used in his shop, with the exception of a few factory bought tools. The lathe is his main tool in the shop. Everything is operated to such perfection that on the lathe only two operations are needed to finish a chair leg with the exception of

the holes for the rungs. The holes are bored in the legs at the proper angle and depth in a drill press. If the cutting tool on the lathe is well sharpened and set, very little sanding is required, if any. This type of chair is not painted or varnished but left in its natural color. The writer in a survey of the chairs still being used found that no one has ever seen the Acadian home made chair painted; so the presently made chairs are being left without any protective finish. The chairs, by being left unpainted, help to keep the selling cost to a minimum.

While the number of tools are very limited, the worker is able to make a very durable chair. In addition to the lathe his tools are: a rasp, a wooden mallet, a hand saw and a circular saw, and a knife - usually his own pocket knife. A part of the shop may be seen in Figure 4. Now that finishing material is plentiful, occasionally he may use sand paper for a real smooth finished chair, which most likely would be for personal use and not for sale.

Now that all the wooden frame work has been done, the maker has all the time he wants to install the seat, which is made of sun cured cowhide. The frame work is not like the seat, once he starts a chair he cannot wait very long before assembling it. If the legs become dry before it is assembled, it will not have the tightening effect that the green wood has, and the chair would easily come apart.

In this remote Acadian Country settled by the Acadians, they developed the cooperative country slaughter house or better known to them as the "boucherie de compagnie" which still exists today.

The country butchery is perhaps little known to Louisianians and yet it is the outstanding cooperative institution still maintained by the

Acadians of Southwest Louisiana. "La boucherie de compagne," as it is called by the Acadians who conduct all of their conversation in French, calls for no exchange of money, although it has a definite organization on a contractual basis.<sup>2</sup> Its function is to supply fresh meat to rural families twice a week. It is a highly important service where economy is largely self-sufficing, with ice scarce and expensive and the summer long and hot. The butchery is conveniently located near the road. The butcher supplies the site, the pen, the scale, the knives, a grindstone and his labor. His pay is his share of the meat twice a week. The animal is killed early in the morning (about 1 A.M.) while the air is cool and before the flies are about.

As these "boucherie de compagne" still exist, this is the place where the chair maker gets the hide for his chairs. The hides are used to make the seats of those comfortable and durable chairs. Every Tuesday and Saturday he makes his visits to the "boucherie" for his hides. Being an old timer, he examines the hide very carefully, looking for cuts that might have been done while skinning the animal. If the skin is found in good shape then the seller gets number one price. The buyer likes the hide from large animals, because it makes better seats and the handling expense is almost the same as a small hide. The hide of a big animal is so much thicker than that from smaller young animals, and for that reason very small hides are refused for this type of work.

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

The hide is then taken home and stretched on the side of some building, the barn usually, for drying (Figure 5). Big nails are placed about six inches apart to hold the hide against the building. The hide is left to dry for a period of three days. All surplus meat and fat are removed from the hide after it is stretched. If the weather is nice and dry for about three days, the hide can be taken down. It is supposed to be what is known as sun cured hide. According to the chair maker, he has never lost a hide. If it rains on them, it just takes a little longer to cure. The hair is left on the hide.

Once the hide is dry, it is taken in to be cut into the proper size for the chair seat. The maker, in order to eliminate waste, has made himself a wooden frame, the same size as the chair, to use as a pattern. The pattern has the shape of a trapezoid so once he starts marking, he keeps going in a straight line but reversing the pattern so as to have very little waste. The seats are carefully laid out so as to get the most possible number from a hide. In his past thirty-eight years of chair making, the most seats made from a hide were seventeen. All of the marking is done on the flesh side of the skin. In cutting out the pattern seat from the hide, there is no waste. What is too small for a seat is cut in small strips and used for lacing. That is one characteristic of the French people; they are very frugal.

Now that the material for the seat has been cut out from the hide, two round holes are cut in two corners to fit over the front legs of the chair (Figure 6). This is done with a punching tool. Small holes are punched all around the leather seat about four inches apart and then put to soak in water. The raw hide seat and lacing are soaked in water for two hours to soften the hide so it will be easier to work.



FIGURE 3

Lathe in the Chair Maker Shop

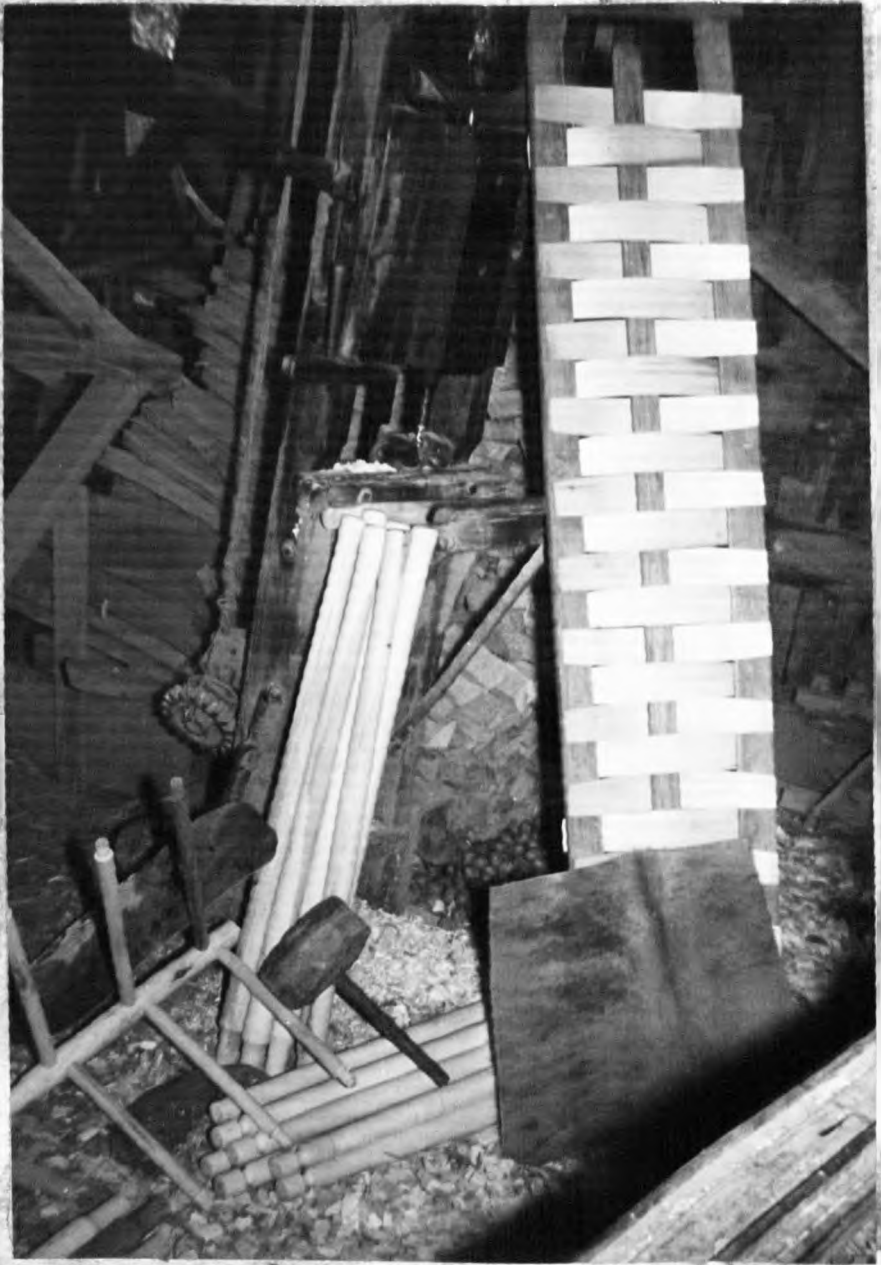


FIGURE 4

Partly Assembled Chair and Backboard Drying Rack





FIGURE 5

Drying a Cow Hide



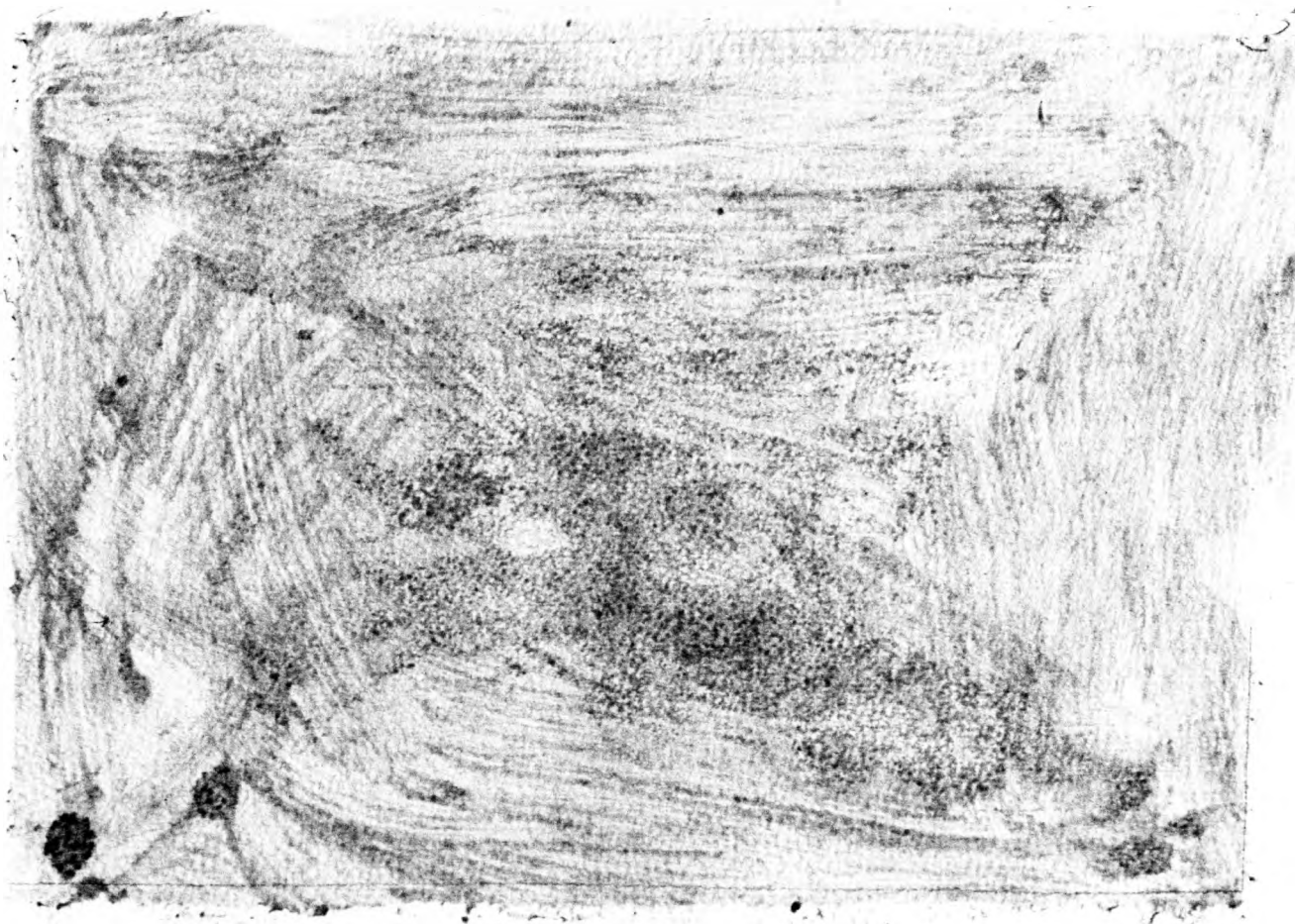


FIGURE 6

An Acadian Chair in Use For More Than a Century

### Palmetto

Palmetto braiding is an art as old as history, the skill being perpetuated, as is most frequently the case in the Acadian native crafts, by home or word-of-mouth teaching from mother to daughter. It is in this manner the writer obtained the knowledge of this art of Palmetto braiding.

So far as the writer has been able to learn, no real effort has been made to collect the instructions for the various patterns which are the products of centuries of braiding.

The braiding art was at one time practiced throughout the Louisiana Acadian country, the palmetto being so plentiful. The palmetto craft is still practiced to some extent in the Acadian country, as the demand for their product is increasing. It was a flourishing industry in the Acadian country when ladies' hats came into use in St. Martinville, Louisiana, around the turn of the eighteenth century. The use of native materials enhances the pleasure of all weavers of palmetto fronds for the most part and produces excellent results. A variety of patterns may be obtained by splitting the leaves into different widths.

There is a colorful tradition in handling the palmetto sprouts in the Acadian country. The palmettos are usually gathered from the nearby woods area (Figure 7). While no roads lead to the back wood area where the palmetto grows best, the people ride horseback. Only the heart, le coeur, is cut and usually late in August when the moon is full.<sup>3</sup> When the harvest season comes around, the Acadians harvest a year's supply of palmettos at a time.

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<sup>3</sup>Times Picayune, May 9, 1948.

The palmettos are usually harvested in August because at that time of the year the growing is slower and the plant has less moisture. The leaves are hung on lines to dry, usually in the attic of the house or in the corn crib (Figure 8). It takes approximately three months before the leaves are cured. Even after the leaves are cured, it is best to keep them hanging. If they are piled on each other where the air cannot get to them, they are likely to mold and mildew. If the leaves are kept hanging, they will keep well from one harvest season to the other.

Now that the palmetto-weaver has his year's supply of palmetto harvested, he will do all the braiding at his leisure time. After the maker has decided which articles he will produce of the many to choose from, he will select the palmetto leaves and treat them according to the Acadian custom for his work. Before the leaves can be braided they have to be wetted, because if they are too dry, it will cause them to break.

The Acadian people have two ways of wetting the palmetto leaves. One method is to put the leaves outside, exposing them to the night dampness, on a barn roof or other convenient place (Figure 9). Only a limited amount is treated at one time. The following morning the leaves are gathered and each leaf is stripped into the correct size for braiding. The stripping is done by placing two needles on a small board a short distance apart from each other depending upon the width of the weaving material desired. The stripping is done while the leaves are still damp. The other method consists of soaking the leaves in water for ten to fifteen minutes, shaking out the surplus water and rolling the material in a heavy cloth in which it is left for several hours or even overnight. The cloth will give

an even dampness to the material and make it pliable.<sup>4</sup> Palmetto may be wetted and dried any number of times, but care must be taken to dry the strips before they start to mildew.

There are also a number of articles being made from the lantaniars palmetto leaves. The long slender leaves, torn into narrow strips, lend themselves readily to the usage of the adept Acadian weaver.

Whether palmetto leaves are to be braided into a hat, handbag, woman's purse, sewing basket, flower carrier or shopping bag, they are all treated alike. The most popular of these articles are the hat and the woman's purse (Figure 10).

The braiding is all done by hand under the expert fingers of the weavers. The only machine used in this type of work is the sewing machine, which is operated with the foot peddle. The braiding is done to suit the weaver or the customer as the case may be. The weaver has her own set ways of braiding with either the even or the uneven number of strands and other types which are strictly her own. There are two basic types of weaves - the check and the herringbone. The check type is a simpler braid and may be done with any number of strands depending on the width.

The braids are stitched together by hand or may be done with the sewing machine. If the sewing is done by hand, the thread is doubled and waxed, especially for a hat.

Another use of the palmetto came about when the women's hats were discovered. A hat! But how could one get in that little town of St.

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<sup>4</sup>Viva Cooke, Julia Sampley, Palmetto Braiding and Weaving (Peoria: The Manual Arts Press), 1947, p. 7.

Martinville in the wilderness, amid a maze of lakes and bayous, hundreds of miles from New Orleans, so rare and novel a thing as a hat. Oh, they call necessity the mother of invention.

The women of St. Martinville, Tonton at their head, had revolted against fate and declared they would have hats if they had to get them at the moon.

Tonton deBlance had one of the prettiest complexions in the world and never went into the yard or garden without a sunbonnet and a thick veil. One day Tonton heard a great noise in the street before her door. All she had heard was a false alarm. Very anxious to go to see, she glanced around for her sunbonnet, but not finding it at hand, rushed bareheaded into the street. At the door she met her young brother and as the sun was hot, she took his hat and put it on her own head. The Rubicon was crossed; Tonton had discovered the hat. But ten minutes later the little widow with the hat in her hand, entered the domicile of its maker and astonished the woman by ordering a hat for her own use, promising five dollars if the work was done to her satisfaction. The palmetto was to be split into the finest possible strip and platted into the form furnished by the customer. It was done, and on Sunday the hat trimmed with roses and ribbons made its appearance in the church of St. Martinville, Louisiana. The next Sunday you could see as many hats as the hatmaker had had time to make and before the end of the month all the women in St. Martinville were wearing palmetto hats. The modistes were furnishing hats at the fabulous price of twenty-five dollars, all trimmed, you understand, and the palmetto hats were really getting to be

a branch of commerce in the little city.<sup>5</sup>

Today along certain sections of the Teche Country, some palmetto wearing, mostly by women, can still be seen. The amount of articles produced is in accordance to the demand. The Acadian weaver still does braiding only in her leisure time. A young lady made the remark that up to the present day she has never bought a summer dress hat. All her hats were homemade by her mother until she was able to develop the skill to make her own.

This type of work is still being done and the demand has been on the increase since Miss Louise Olivier has taken up the Acadian Handicraft project. It is the wish of the makers of the fine handmade palmetto articles that some day they will be able to do that type of work as a main source of income rather than a hobby as it is in the present day.

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<sup>5</sup>G. W. Cable, Strange True Stories of Louisiana (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), pp. 104-6.



FIGURE 7

Palmetto Plants





FIGURE 8

Drying Palmetto Leaves





FIGURE 9

Exposing Palmettos to Night Dampness

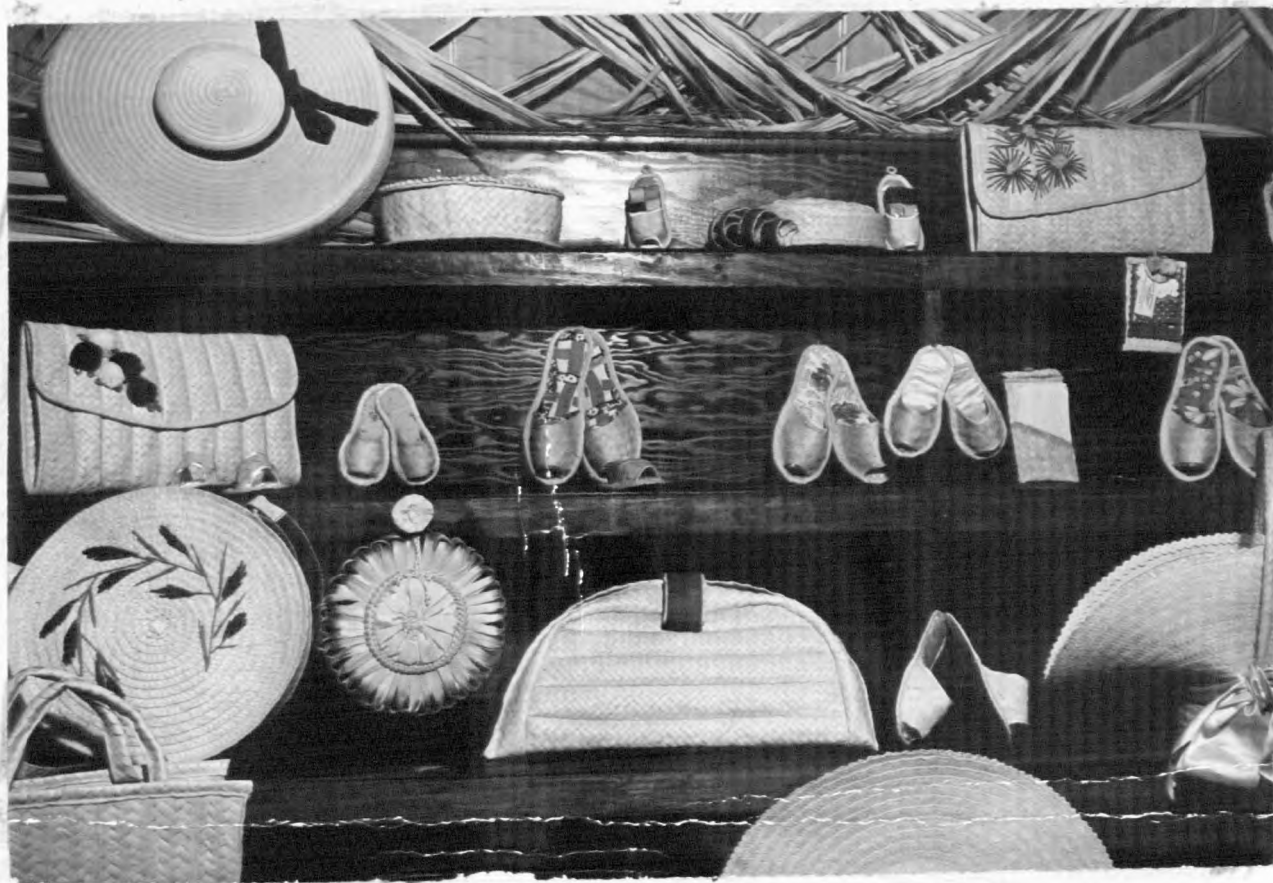


FIGURE 10

Articles Made From Palmetto Leaves

### The Spinning Wheel and the Loom in the Acadian Country

The old spinning wheel is not an antique in some homes of the Acadians nowadays. However, it was during the last century that Acadian weaving was in such great demand. Then spinning wheels and hand looms were standard equipment in all Acadian homes. The old spinning wheels in the Acadian Country are neatly made, with legs and round parts well turned on the lathes. Mortised joints and wooden pegs hold them together, but a few of the later wheels have nails instead of pegs. It is said that most of these wheels were brought from the eastern part of the United States, especially in the later years. It seems reasonable to say that they are similar to those found in other parts of the country. It is also believed that the exiled Acadians brought some spinning wheels with them as can be seen in the picture of "The Deportation of the Acadians" as studied by the writer.

The techniques of spinning and weaving were brought to the Acadian Country with the coming of the Acadians, and they seem to have remained unchanged.

The looms are all handmade and are massive in construction. A yard is the greatest width any of these looms can work, although they are about seven feet long, six feet high, and over six feet wide (Figure 11). As such an outfit is an enormous piece of equipment for a small house, the looms were often kept in the attics of the old steep roofed houses or in a special shed or building away from the house. It was in the latter shelter that they were found by the writer at the time of his visit.

The main material for weaving was cotton, either white or yellow. A few Acadians kept sheep to furnish wool for blanket and cloth making, but the great majority of their articles were made of cotton. Dyes were little used but some of the present Acadian weavers are using commercial dyes with good results. All variations in color run the entire width of the material, a condition which greatly limited the possibilities of designs as compared with the Navajo and Mexican weaving<sup>6</sup> (Figure 12).

With cotton being the main material used for weaving, the Acadians had the white cotton and the yellow cotton, or "the Nanking cotton." Very little of the yellow cotton is used in making an article - it is usually used for design with the white cotton. Every family who still works on the loom, plants whatever amount of yellow cotton they may need during the coming year. The white cotton is one of the main sources of income and it is produced in large quantities. The regular cotton buyer does not care for nanking cotton, so it is taken to the cotton gin at the close of the ginning season so as to avoid seed mixing. The farmers, who had the yellow cotton, are told in advance what day the gin manager would gin their cotton. All of the cotton up to the present day is handpicked and hauled to the gin in the wagon. The cotton lint is taken back and stored for later use. It is the same process for the white cotton but it may be taken back any time the farmer wants to as this variety is produced in large amounts. Now that the seeds have been removed from the lint, the weaver can prepare the cotton for the loom work.

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<sup>6</sup>Lauren C. Post, "An Acadian Art," Louisiana State University, Alumni News, II (March, 1935), 18.

There are a few steps in working up the cotton before it actually goes into the finished articles. One of the first operations is to remove all leaf particles, stems or other particles which might be found in the cotton lint before it is fluffed. Fluffing is to work the cotton in such a way as to cause it to puff out. The tool has the same shape as the bow used in archery. The string is pulled away and released into the cotton causing it to puff up. The operation is repeated as long as the cotton is not well puffed up. Only a very small amount is fluffed at one time - about one pound.

After the cotton has been fluffed, it is then ready for carding. This type of work is still done by hand by means of two rectangular boards 10 inches by 5 inches with a handle on each board. The boards are covered with wire-toothed card on one side only. With a carding paddle in each hand and some cotton between the paddle, they are pulled in opposite directions until the cotton is all taken into the carding tooth. After the cotton has been taken into those wire-toothed cards and removed by reversing the operation, the cotton is said to be carded (Figure 13). The cotton comes out of the carding paddle in a sheet or roll called sliver.

The carding of the cotton prepares it for the spinning wheel where it is spun into one continuous thread and spooled on corn cobs and reed cones (Figure 14). In all of this antiquated process of the weaving, there is nothing that impresses the onlooker so vitally with this obsolete method of cloth-making as does the sight of these corn cobs and reed cones. Then comes the threading of the looms -- the most lengthy and intricate performance of cloth production (Figure 15). Then the actual weaving begins.

One of the most familiar household articles made was the blanket. Blankets were first made in one piece, thirty-three to thirty-six inches in width and nearly fourteen feet long. The piece was then cut in two and whipped together in the center, making a blanket of a little less than six by seven feet in dimension. In one such particular blanket there were 488 threads in the warp or fifteen threads per inch. Such material is heavy enough for light rugs. When used as blankets, it lasts for several decades. Up until lately it has been the practice for the mother to make six blankets for each daughter when she gets married.

Among the first products of home weaving to be dropped were suits and trousers. However, some people still have a pair of homespun trousers in which they posed for photographs.

Trousers of contonade were worn by the early Acadians almost exclusively, and it was not until the first decade of this century that they were finally driven out of use by "store clothes."

Acadian weaving merits perpetuation and there should be a demand for many of the smaller things that the people can still produce with ease and facility. Certainly if the work is commercialized, their finer work should find a widespread demand.

Blankets woven of cotton have come to be recognized as among the most excellent articles turned out of these looms. This is saying a good deal, since all the material woven by the Acadians is practically everlasting. For years women have woven their own rugs, bedspreads, curtains and other lines to furnish only their own households. Nowadays, through the help of the General Extension Division of Louisiana State University, these people are able to sell all the articles they can produce.

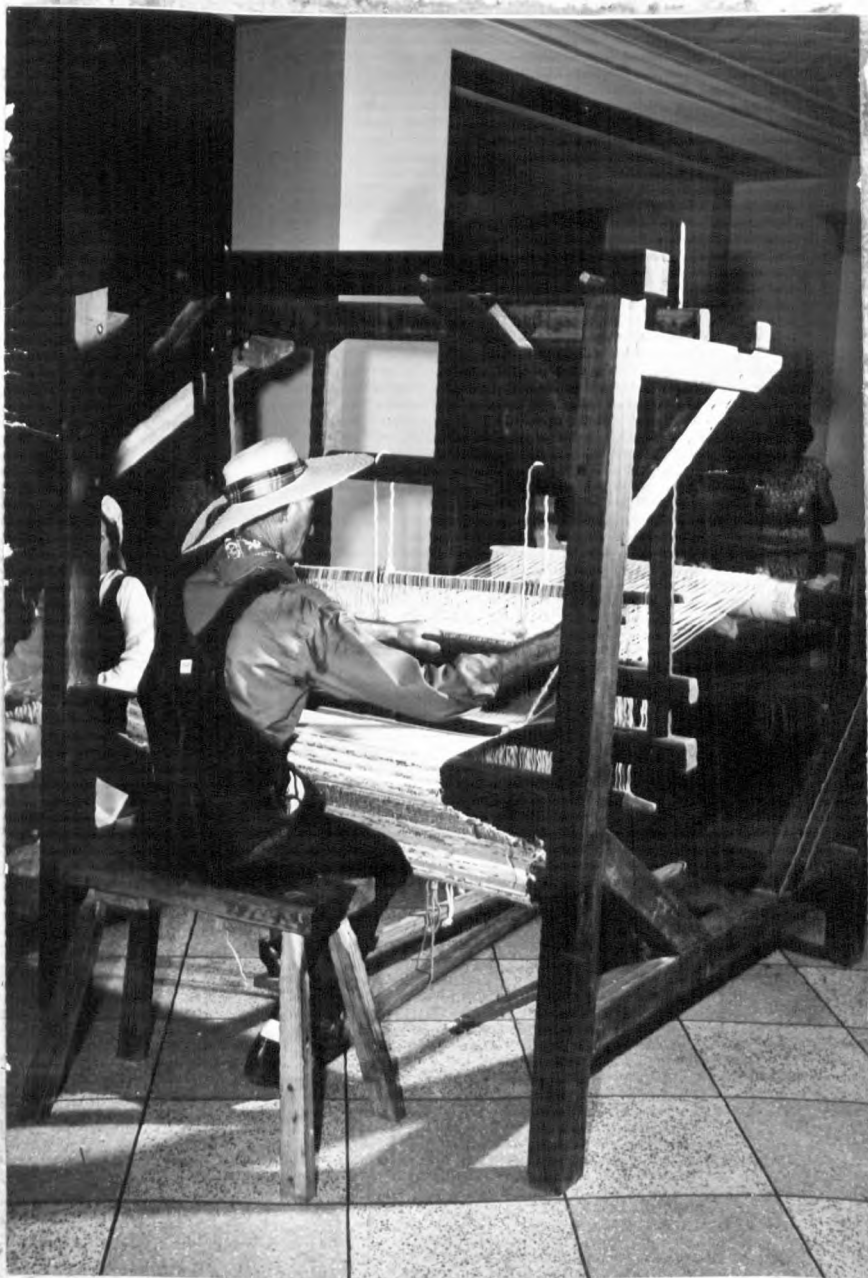


FIGURE 11

An Acadian Working At The Loom



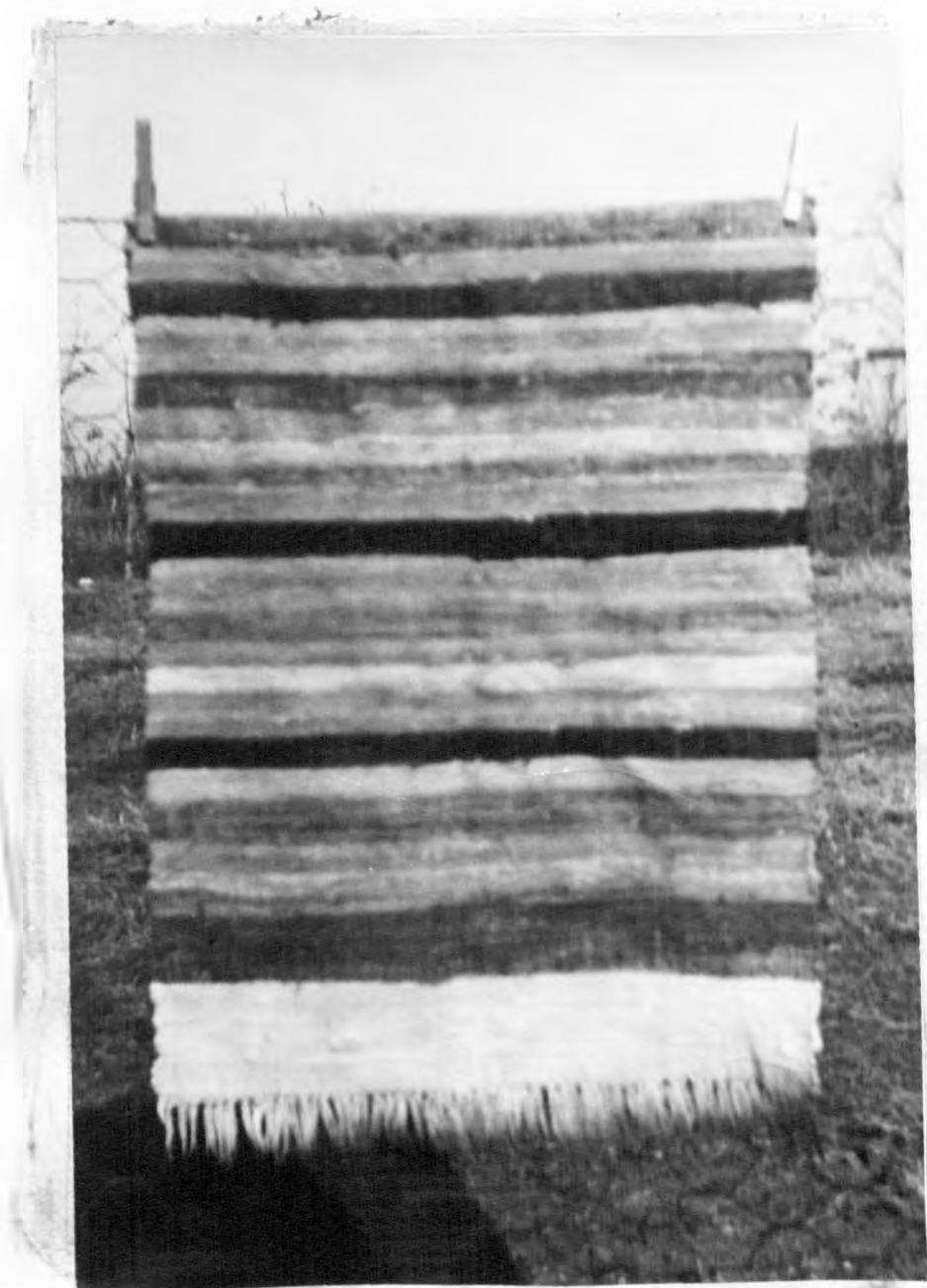


FIGURE 12

A Rug Made On The Loom







FIGURE 13

An Acadian Girl Carding Cotton



FIGURE 14

Spinning Slivers into Yarn  
(Note: Fluffing Tool Hanging on Wall)



FIGURE 15

Left to Right: Fluffing Cotton, Guiding Thread, Carding, Threading the Loom

### Rope

When the Acadians came to Louisiana in the middle of the Eighteenth Century, they had to make many of the things they needed or wait a very long time to get them. In this Acadian section of Louisiana cattle raising was a big business then and ropes, girths and collars were in big demand. A girth is the hairy belt with which a cowboy laces his saddle to the horse. The collar is a part of the harness of draft animals, fitted over the shoulder and bearing the stress of drawing, the rope -- a stout cord made up of strands of twisted fibre or hair, as the case may be, used for lasso of steers and horses' reins.

The pioneer settlers could not turn around to the corner grocery for a new girth, when his old one gave away. The cowboy made his own girth and did a good job of it, too, for his life often hung by the thread which he spun. The hand spinning of threads for girths is not as popular in Louisiana now as it once was, but there are still men in the Acadian country who insist that they can make a better girth than they can buy.

The spinning of hair for use in making a girth, rope, and collar was done on a simple little machine called a tarrabee. The tarrabee is an all wood tool carved by hand from some hard wood the man of the house had on hand. Patterns vary some, but all tarrabees work on the same principle. The tarrabee is a wooden paddle about three or four inches wide at the bottom and comes to a pointed end with a knob. Just below the knob, a small hole is drilled for the handle. The handle is used as the axis around which the paddle rotates. The paddle varies in length from twelve to twenty inches and the length of the handle varies with the individual user.

But it must be long enough to provide a good grip. The wood of a well-used tarrabee, after years of use, takes on the appearance of satinwood due to the contact with the oily hair and sweating hands, and gives it a rich brown polish. The tarrabee is not an imposing looking implement but it is efficient in spite of its humble appearance.

Material for hair rope making in the early days was often laboriously obtained. The favorite hair then in use was that taken from the manes of horses and mules, although when horse and mule hair were not obtainable, the hair from the cow's tail was just as much in demand. The writer, for his project has used only cow's hair, because it was more plentiful at the time (Figure 16). According to the rope-maker, for a good size hair rope or cabresse, as called by the Acadians, for ordinary use it would require the hair from forty cow's tails. That number would be enough to make a rope about one inch in diameter and about twelve feet long, which could be used as a buggy rope. All the hair for this craft was obtained from the farmers in the French Acadian section of Louisiana. The writer, being a native of the Acadian country and of French descent and speaking the language fluently, had no trouble in getting plenty of material. Most of the hair-cutting was done personally and with very little assistance.

The hair rope is very soft and will remain soft even after it has been thoroughly water soaked. It dries very fast and much quicker than hemp rope. Young calves will not chew hair rope if it is left out on the barnyard fence, which is of particular advantage.

It is the common practice among the Acadian farmers to clip all the hair from the cow's tail before turning them out in the pasture in the fall.

This practice is still being done on account of the cockle burs which are still plentiful in some fields.

Men were very particular as to just what hair they wanted to use when they had an abundance of hair to choose from, but when caught short, they could make almost any fiber into a girth or rope that could be used for a time at least.

Spanish moss is very plentiful in the Acadian country and has been used in making mattresses, horse collars, ropes, and saddle blankets. The Spanish moss, after thorough airing, was worked up on the tarrabee, the same way the hair is worked. The use of moss for a rope was never very popular because it would not stand as much wear, but as a collar or saddle blanket it was very serviceable.

The girth, collar, and rope are all made in the same manner, with the exception of the rope which is made of more strands to add strength for roping use.

A very important factor to consider in making a hair rope is the weather. The time of the year makes no difference just as long as the weather is dry. During wet weather the hair has a tendency to slip while it is being twisted causing much discomfort to the operator. It is really too much of a waste of time for one to try rope-making in damp weather. Whenever a farmer happens to ask a rope-maker to make a rope for him the usual answer is -- "come any time when the weather is dry." This craft is done strictly in one's leisure time and the gathering of the material is pretty slow and usually done once a year. The hair is used in the natural color and the rope has no definite set color pattern. These French people want a rope regardless of the color of hair used.



The making of a hair rope requires at least two persons - one to feed the hair and the other to operate the tarrabee. If the operator happens to have an extra tarrabee, it will help speed up the work. When the growing strand has reached the desired length, the persons feeding the hair then hooks a tarrabee to his end, thereby speeding up the twisting process of the strand.

The operator who wishes to make a rope, having obtained his material to work with and his tarrabee to spin it with, piles his hair lightly by his side in a container (Figure 17). The operator holds the tarrabee close to the basket and winds a few strands of hair loosely about the small end of the tarrabee or twisting paddle. The knob on the paddle keeps the hair from slipping off. With the hair looped over the end of the tarrabee, the operator starts twirling the paddle using the handle as an axis on which to spin it. As most Acadian families were large, the children usually did the twirling. Spinning of the yarn always fascinated the children.

The operator's job is to feed fresh hair onto the growing end of the strand and to call for the speed, that he desired his young assistant to use, in swinging the paddle (Figure 18). When the first strand has reached the desired length, it is doubled and twisted again. The twisting of the first double strand determines how tight the rope will be. Then it is doubled again twice, making a four strand rope and with a final winding, the rope is complete (Figure 19). The tarrabees are removed and a knot made at each end (Figure 20).

It has to be held tight at all times to avoid tangles. If for any reason the work is suspended before the rope is completed, the strand

is held tight and wound onto a stick to keep it free from tangling until the work can be resumed.

The handmade girth and rope are strong, long-wearing articles that were good enough for the most decorated saddles that could be bought. The hair rope often used for roping has been replaced today by the hemp rope. The hemp rope has some advantages such as: it is heavier, stiffer and handles better for some types of work. Although the hemp rope has a few advantages over the hair rope or "cabresse," these French Acadian people have kept this craft going since their landing in Louisiana over one hundred and seventy-five years ago. The use of the tarrabee in conjunction with hair-rope making was learned from the Spaniards who were among the first settlers in Louisiana.



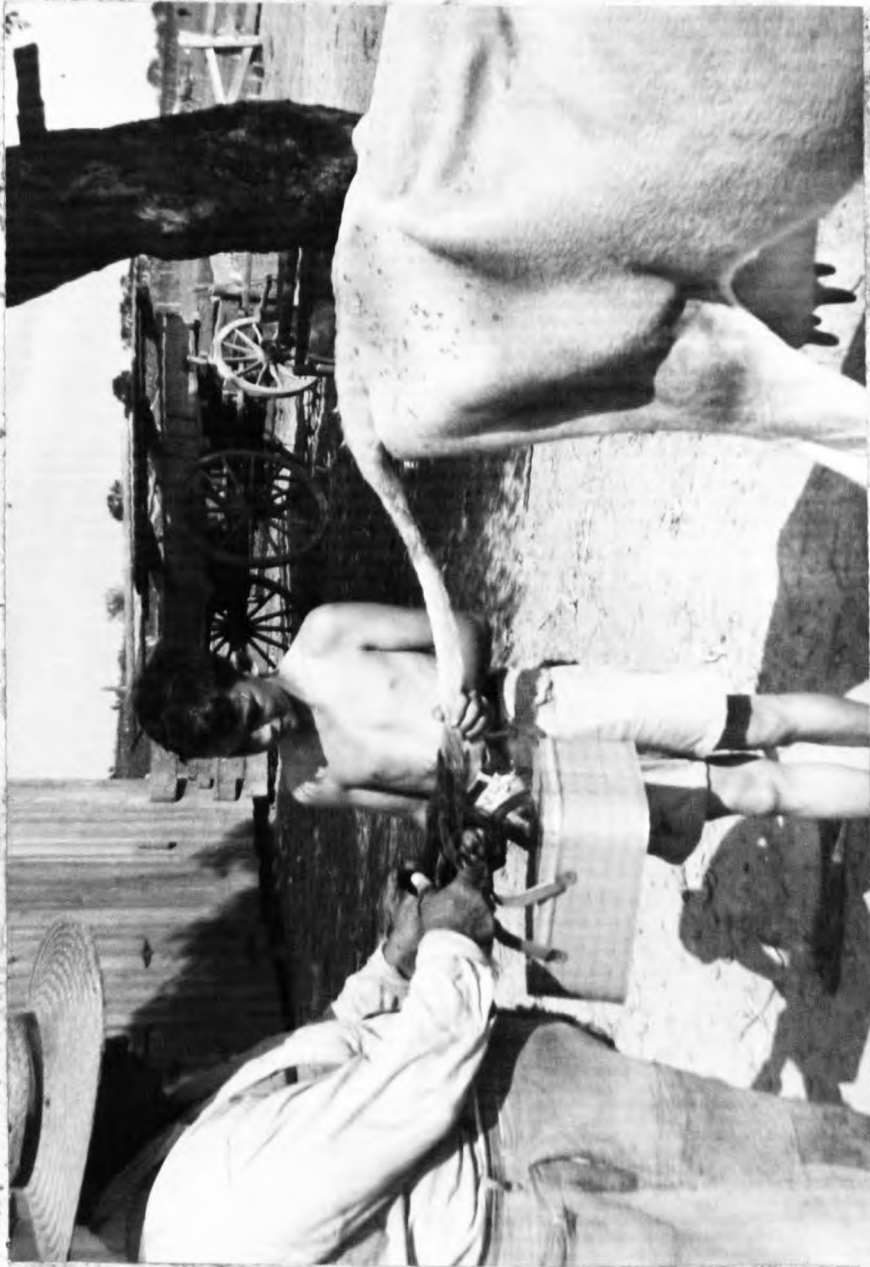


FIGURE 16

Gathering Hair for Rope Making



FIGURE 17

Feeding Hair to Growing Strand of Rope



FIGURE 18

The Rope Maker and His Assistant



FIGURE 19

Four Strands Before Final Twisting



FIGURE 20

Rope With Tarrabee On Each End

## Basket

Basket making has been found among all primitive peoples and is one of the most ancient of all the arts. As the earliest form of weaving, it may be regarded as the parent of cloth-making and all other textile industries.<sup>7</sup>

Among the American Indians, especially the western tribes, the art of basket-weaving reached its highest development and was of the greatest importance.

Captain John Smith speaks of shields and armor used by the Indians in warfare which were woven so firmly that no arrow could pierce them.<sup>8</sup> At any rate baskets have been in use for so long that we have no idea how far back in the dim and distant past that basket weaving started.

Our North American Indians at one time were considered among the most expert basket-weavers in the world. Now only the older Indians know the art, and certain tribes whose work was incomparably fine and beautiful have already lost it.

Basket making is one of the simplest of the mechanic arts; and the workman, in making baskets designed them for use and not for ornament or to please the fancy. The amount of tools needed for that type of work is very limited. Some useful tools in basket making are: the knife, bodkin, awl, mallet, ax, wedge, and a saw. Basket making is essentially

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<sup>7</sup>A. H. McDannald, editor, The Encyclopedia Americana, (New York: Americana Corporation, 1947) 111, 311.

<sup>8</sup>Guy Stanton Ford, editor, Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia, (New York: F. E. Compton & Company, 1950) 11, 73.

a handicraft and the basket-maker's chief tools are still his practiced hand and trained eye.

The material most commonly employed in basket-making is the willow or osier twig and the production of this material is an important industry in France, Germany, Belgium, Holland and Britain. The products of France and Britain are the most highly esteemed for firmness, toughness, and evenness. Besides osier twigs, a great variety of other materials are employed in basket-making. In the Acadian country coarse strong baskets are made of shavings or long broad splits of various tough wood.

Among the materials from which baskets are made are corn husks, corn stalks, rye, willows, cane, honeysuckle vine, pine needles and more often of all splints of oak, hickory, and ash. All of these grow throughout the Acadian Country.

White oak, while still green, splits very well and requires no treatment in preparing it for use. There is no certain time of the year to harvest the material for basket making but it is preferred in the spring when the sap starts to flow. Only the small oak trees of not over ten inches in diameter are used for this type of work. These young trees are selected for basket making before they are cut. Some of the young oak trees have too many knots and therefore make them unpopular for basket work. Only a limited amount of oak trees are taken in at a given time, thereby giving the basket maker a chance to work the material before it gets too dry. It is not advisable to try to work dry oak for basket making.

The tree trunk is cut into the desired length and split in quarters by means of an axe, a wedge, and sledge hammer (Figure 21). Then



the bark and the center or heart of the wood are detached from the sap wood. The center part of the tree is not pliable enough so it is discarded for basket making.

With a machete and a mallet the sap is split into strips of about one-eighth inch thick and one inch wide along the annual growth ring (Figure 22). The weft and warp are both cut from the same wood and are of the same thickness.

If the basket-maker is unable to start work after he has all his warp and weft cut, he simply stores them. When his time does permit him to work, he just soaks the strips in water for two or three hours and they become very pliable again. From the writer's knowledge and those interviewed, the baskets are left in their natural finished color (Figure 23). Since no protective finish of any kind is used, it helps to maintain a low selling price.

This craft has escaped the introduction of machinery and baskets of today are still made in the same manner as they were when the Acadians came to Louisiana over one hundred and seventy-five years ago. Although the Acadians have been making baskets for that many years, no one of today makes baskets solely for a living. All the basket making in the Acadian country is done during their leisure time.

The round bottom baskets, used for grain and cotton, are made by taking from 10 to 18 ribs, or warps, and laying them across each other at the middle in a radiating form, and weaving around, over and under with a narrow thin strip, until the desired size for the bottom is reached.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Direction for Collection of American Basketry, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902) pp 4-13.



Then the warps are turned up and still using the checkerwork style, more strength is put on the wefts causing them to hold an upright form. Many more wefts are woven until the desired height is reached. The warps and wefts are the same thickness and width. The top rim is installed at the desired height. It is made of the same material as the warps and wefts but much thicker. There are two rim pieces used at the top, one on the outside and one on the inside, giving it a semi-circle ridge at the top. The warps are then bent back, using them to keep the rim from slipping and with another long thin strip wrapped around the rim to hold it firmly in place.

The process can be learned in principle by inspection of a basket-maker at work in fashioning a basket from the foundation to the rim.

Since basket making is an old art and has been known all over the world, it is most probable that the Acadians knew some forms of basket making before settling in Louisiana. One oddity is how these people have kept certain crafts for so long within certain families. All the knowledge of the craft was taught in the home and usually all members of the family learned the trade. Nowadays the market for baskets is very good.

In the Acadian country where baskets are still being made one may find only a few different forms but many odd sizes. The square and rectangular forms are still to be seen, but the round form is the most popular.



FIGURE 21

Tree Trunk and Tools Used in Basketry



FIGURE 22

Weft For Basket Making

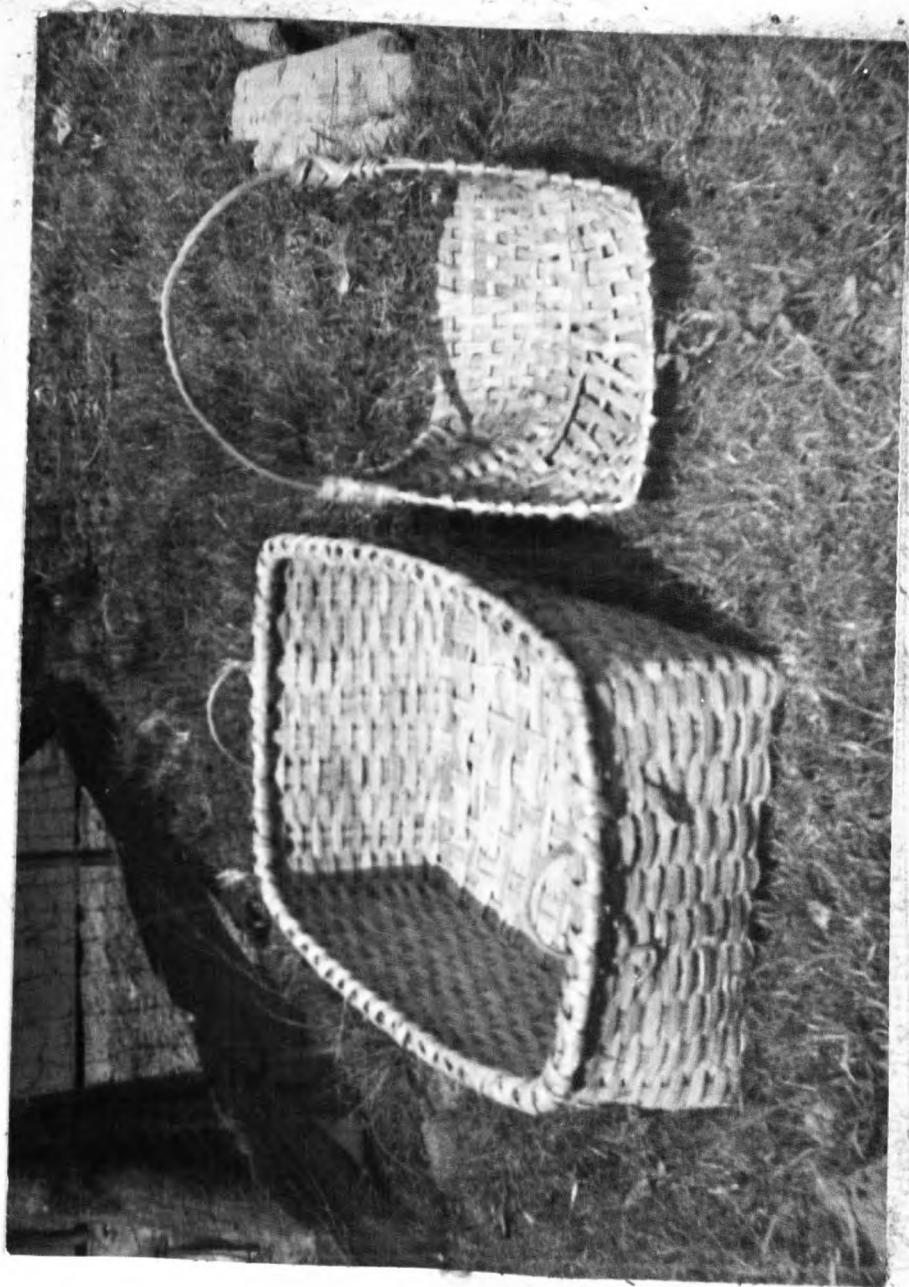


FIGURE 23

Baskets Made From Split Oak

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

In making this study the writer made a complete survey of five different crafts that are now being done in the Acadian section of Louisiana. The data for this report were secured by personal interview of the craft-worker, literature from this section of Louisiana, review of old pictures and from the field representative of the General Extension Division of Louisiana State University. All craft-workers interviewed for this study spoke French. The handicraft work is done strictly on their leisure time and no regular work hours have been reported.

It was found that there are between forty to fifty people working under the supervision of the Louisiana State University General Extension Field Representative at the present time. All the articles produced under the supervision of the field representative must meet very high quality standards.

The Acadian handicraft articles are sold under its registered label. There are more than twenty sales shops in the state of Louisiana today.

All the materials for the Acadian handicraft articles are grown locally. Practically all the work performed in making them is still done by hand. Very little machinery was found to be used by the Acadian workers.

This study was undertaken to acquaint those outside the region with this great reservoir of Acadian handicraft work and to encourage a wider use of these products. Another intention of this study was to have a written account of the Acadian crafts and how the work was kept alive from one generation to the other.

The area encompassed in this study was the five parishes of Southwest Louisiana, namely, St. Martin, Lafayette, St. Landry, Vermilion, and Acadia.

The Acadian craft projects were made mostly as a hobby until recently when Miss Louise Olivier undertook the work to preserve their crafts and are now made for sales purposes, which gives a gross income between seven and ten thousand dollars a year, according to the past records.

### Conclusions

Louisiana's Acadian country of Southwestern Louisiana affords much in handicraft that may be used as an interest approach to the Louisiana people of other sections. By bringing the Acadian Crafts to the attention of the school, students would have a different outlook and an increased appreciation could be developed. If the progressive school, public and private, want to take advantage of proving the value of "learning by doing," then the student should be taught some local craft work in our high school industrial arts shop. It is now called to our attention that we have in this state a cultural history worthy of recognition and preservation. It can be assumed, therefore, that the cultural history of the Acadians in Louisiana is of some value to us.

The native Acadian artistic abilities should be given an opportunity to develop in schools, where handicraft work is being taught, this presents an opportunity that should be recognized.

In the study of the crafts it was found that those of today are on as high a level of perfection as those of the past.

The Acadian native is a clever creator and his artistic abilities should be given an opportunity to develop. Certain organizations are making a special effort to emphasize and encourage creative work.

As a result of this study, the writer concludes that basket and chair making, palmetto braiding and rope making could be used for activities in the school industrial arts shop.

#### Recommendations for Further Studies

Several topics of related nature were revealed in making this study. Since it was impossible to secure data at that time, it is recommended that the following would be subjects for investigation at a later date.

1. To make a study of the designs and patterns used in Acadian handicraft work.
2. To develop a series of instruction sheets for each craft as a basis for instruction in industrial arts shops.
3. To determine ways and means by which the Acadian handicraft activity may expand with new projects, designs, and market-wise.

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## APPENDIX

## RETAIL OUTLETS FOR ACADIAN HANDICRAFT WORK PROJECT

THE VILLAGE SHOP. . . . .	Alexandria
L.S.U. ACADIAN HANDICRAFT DISPLAY ROOM	
University Campus. . . . .	Baton Rouge
J.E. DAIGLE & SON CO., LTD. . . . .	Church Point
FRANKIE'S TOT TO TEEN SHOP. . . . .	Crowley
LA VOGUE SHOP . . . . .	Munice
BARBARA'S FAIRYLAND . . . . .	Houma
STARHILL TRADING POST . . . . .	Jackson
MRS. NORBERT DURETT . . . . .	Jennerette
ROSEBUD'S GIFT AND BABY SHOP. . . . .	Jennings
EVANGELINE COURTS . . . . .	Lafayette
LLOYD'S . . . . .	Lake Charles
DURETT FURNITURE CO., INC.	
GIFT AND HOUSEWARE DEPT. . . . .	Monroe
BERNARD'S NEW IBERIA FLOWER SHOP. . . . .	New Iberia
COLONIAL COURT. . . . .	New Iberia
MERVINE KAHN CO. . . . .	Rayne
THE TEE WEE SHOP. . . . .	St. Martinville
DOMINIQUE'S . . . . .	Sunset
RAGAN'S TOT SHOP. . . . .	Thibodaux
THE HOBBY SHOP . . . . .	Ferriday
BABYLAND . . . . .	Franklin
THE CHILDREN SHOP . . . . .	Haynesville
LA PETITE SHOP. . . . .	Opelousas
ACADIAN CRAFT SHOP. . . . .	St. Martinville
JEAN ANN FASHIONS . . . . .	Shreveport
JUNIOR TOWN . . . . .	Shreveport

## BIOGRAPHY

Valex Richard was born in Scott, Louisiana, September 30, 1915. He was graduated from Scott High School, Scott, Louisiana, in June 1936 and attended Southwestern Louisiana Institute for one year.

After working four years in the dairy industry, he entered the army on February 16, 1942. Forty-seven months were spent in the army. Upon discharge from the service, he re-entered Southwestern Louisiana Institute, where he received the Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Arts in the Fall of 1949. He entered the Louisiana State University in the Spring of 1950 and became a candidate for the Master of Science degree in June, 1951.

# EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Valox Richard

Major Field: Industrial Education

Title of Thesis: Louisiana Acadian Handicrafts

Approved:

Walter G. Kauer  
Major Professor and Chairman

Richard Russell  
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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Date of Examination:

Jan. 16, 1951